

Message Text

SECRET

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15

ACTION PM-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ADP-00 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 MC-02 ACDA-19 L-03 RSR-01 /081 W

----- 074810

R 160601 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3901

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

USMTM DHAHRAN

S E C R E T JIDDA 2018

SECDEF FOR ISA

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SA

SUBJ: POSSIBLE OFFER OF SELF- PROPELLED 155 MM GUN TO
SAUDI ARABIA

REF: A. USMTM 240906 Z MAR 73 (NOTAL); B. SECDEF 081442 Z AUG 7 2

1. IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED TO USMTM BY EUCOM AND USAMC THAT WE SHOULD QUERY SAUDIS ON THEIR INTEREST IN PURCHASING SELF- PROPELLED 155 MM, 8- INCH, AND 175 MM ARTILLERY.
2. USMTM CONCLUDES THAT SAUDI ARABIAN ARMY COULD BENEFIT FROM POSSESSION OF 155 MM SELF- PROPELLED HOWITZER WHICH WOULD PROVIDE DEGREE OF FIREPOWER MOBILITY MUCH SUPERIOR TO PRESENT TOWED ARTILLERY NOW IN SAUDI INFANTRY. SINCE SAUDIS ALREADY HAVE 155 MM AMMUNITION (FOR ITS PRESENT COMPLEMENT OF TOWED WEAPONS OF THIS CATEGORY) PRESENT AMMUNITION SUPPLY SYSTEM COULD ACCOMMODATE THE 155 SELF- PROPELLED HOWITZER. EMBASSY CONCURS IN USMTM VIEW.
3. USMTM, HOWEVER, WOULD NOT SUGGEST ACQUISITION OF 8- INCH HOWITZER NOR 175 MM GUN. HANDLING AMMUNITION FOR FORMER WOULD PRESENT SPECIAL PROBLEMS AND LATTER HAS BEEN FOUND

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TO BE A WEAPON SO COMPLEX TO MAINTAIN AS TO CAUSE SAUDIS
SPECIAL PROBLEMS.

4. ACCORDINGLY, IF DEPT SEES NO OBJECTION, WE WOULD PRO-
POSE AUTHORIZE CHUSMTM PROCEED WITH INFORMING SAUDIS
SELF- PROPELLED 155 MM IS AVAILABLE AND THAT WHILE WE DO
NOT URGE ITS ACQUISITION, WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS A SUIT-
ABLE WEAPON FOR SAUDI ARABIAN ARMY. PLEASE ADVISE.
THACHER

SECRET
NMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** SECRET

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